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“Remarks for the Career Program 18 Workshop”

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Good morning and thank you for that kind introduction.

It is a pleasure and an honor to be here in Williamsburg today to speak with all of you about career programs and specifically your career program and what it means to the Army and to you.

I want to specifically thank Bill Brown for the opportunity to be here. Bill and I have had some great discussions over the past year on some important improvements in CP18, which we believe will be beneficial to the Army and how we do business. We also believe these will be exciting improvements for many of you as you seek to enhance your career opportunities. Now, I know some of you may be wondering why CP18 is considering developing a new approach. The answer is simple, the entire Army is transforming itself to meet the challenges of a new

Century. As civilians, we must prepare ourselves to meet these challenges as well. It is important to the soldier, to the Army, and to the American public that we remain well trained and capable to perform critical mission requirements in carrying out our national security responsibilities. Your ability to perform on the job and to the best of your ability is critical to the Army's success.

The Army's Transformation Strategy will result in an Objective Force that is more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable than the present force. The Army has determined to transform itself to gain strategic flexibility and to become strategically dominant at every point on the spectrum of operations. Our engineers and scientists will have much to do to support this vision and many of you are intimately involved already.

We will face many challenges in the next decade. The Army is undergoing profound changes as its center of gravity shifts from overseas installations to CONUS-based forces – forces that deploy more frequently than any time in our history. Just last

month, we had over 24,000 soldiers – Active, Reserve, and National Guard components – deployed in more than 75 nations around the globe. In addition, there were 123,000 soldiers forward stationed in 108 countries. Many of these places are not “garden spots”. The work is difficult and full of risks, the workdays are long, and the climate is often inhospitable. Engineers are the first in – just like 225 years ago in the Revolutionary War.

Improving operational effectiveness and the quality of life for our deployed soldiers is an important function of the Army engineers. From providing temporary housing, to constructing infrastructure for forward-deployed bases, to supporting the transport and delivery of equipment and material, to managing environmental issues that help reduce health risks to our soldiers – your work is essential to the Army’s success.

In addition to deployments, we operate more “cities” than any other organization in the world and engineers make sure the cities operate. We have extensive industrial facilities, research and development centers, labs, hospitals, and military training

areas. We train, transport, build, manufacture, repair, maintain and do research of all kinds. This incredible array of complex activities presents a one-of-a-kind challenge for all of you. Rarely are our colleagues in the private sector asked to apply their skills and knowledge in such diverse settings.

But, in many ways, our current transformation is responding to another formidable change that has taken place over the past decade – the drawdown from the Cold War. This reduction in force was not only experienced by our “green suiters”, but by our civilian workforce as well. From 1989 to 1999, the Department of Army reduced its civilian strength from 434,000 to 250,000, a reduction of 42%. Furthermore, the Army has programmed civilian reductions to reach an end-strength of just under 210,000 by fiscal year 2005 resulting in a cumulative reduction of 48%.

This has placed considerable stress on organizations and individuals as we work through the business changes necessary to carry out our sustaining base responsibilities and to support our deployed soldiers. Workload management, efficiencies,

application of technology, and reengineering initiatives are key to achieving infrastructure reductions and accomplishing the necessary work at optimum levels on a daily basis.

On top of our downsizing over the past decade and the projections for the next few years, we are also facing another manpower crisis as the baby boomers reach retirement. Average age of the Army civilian increased from 43 in fiscal year 1989 to 46.6 in fiscal year 1999. Over 35% of the current Army workforce is aged 51 or above. By the way, as much as I regret having to tell you, this category includes me. And, combined with the baby boomer retirements we will face in the next decade, we have also seen a declining percentage of civilians aged 30 or below entering the workforce to fill open jobs.

OK! – many of you are probably wondering when I am going to stop with all this “doom and gloom”. I must admit that if you only look at the numbers, it can be somewhat depressing. But I believe there is much to be positive about as well. I am a firm believer that with change comes opportunity and that is one

reason why I regretted mentioning that I am in the 51 and over category. I sort of envy the generations of Army civilians following me. The excitement of a new century, the challenge of a dramatic and strategic transformation of the Army that will take place over the next decade or so, and the huge number of career opportunities that will be available to you will be awesome.

We must also realize that the drawdown of our military after major conflict is an American tradition – one that we have experienced after every major conflict since the Revolutionary War. Thus, as Americans, we should not look on these changes as negative but rather take pride in our system of government. Of course, an important distinction after the Cold War drawdown is that our deployments increased dramatically. And, there is little indication that our OPTEMPO will decrease any time soon.

During all of this change, we must not forget that the Army civilian workforce has been and continues to be a major contributor to military readiness, providing continuity, expertise, and commitment. Army civilians sustain the base! We provide

significant support in depot maintenance, supply, acquisition, transportation, training, deployment, medical care, research and development, engineering, and facilities operations. Career Program 18 is a key mechanism for the Army to train our civilian workforce to accomplish many of these mission requirements.

I believe the Army's education and training system is one of our greatest strengths. Career programs represent the essence of how the Army trains its civilian workforce. And, as we consider the changes we are facing in the Army, I believe our career programs are more important than ever before. I have always felt that the goal of a good career program is really to improve the professionalism of those in the program. This is more than providing technical training. It means providing education in leadership and opportunities to broaden one's experiences. It means growing people as individuals and ensuring the Army values become second nature. Our civilian employees are essential assets – the human assets – required by the Army to perform its mission. And, like any other asset in the Army's

inventory, we must make investments to acquire, improve, sustain, and maintain our human assets. The Career Program provides an important function in doing just that.

It is important to realize that Career Programs mean different things depending on where you are at in your career. In general, a Career Program must do three things. It must provide for quality intake, provide for developmental programs, and ultimately allow for referrals. Ensuring quality intake has been and will continue to be a major challenge for the Army, and particularly for CP-18. While we are all enjoying the fruits of a strong American economy, it does make it difficult to entice those new college graduates into choosing the Army as a career.

Providing developmental programs represents the largest portion of the career program and, as I mentioned before, these programs must range from technical training to leadership education, to growing the individual. And finally, allowing for referral is essential as well. Broadening one's experience by undertaking new challenges in employment only enhances the

overall workforce. Career programs must provide for an easy to use and quality referral system.

I believe that CP-18 is one of the best career programs in the Department of Defense. I would say the best, but as the Functional Chief for the Army Safety Career Program, CP-12, I will have to say that CP-18 is at least one of the top two. In fact, my experience as the Functional Chief Representative for CP-12 for 6 years, and as the Functional Chief for 5 years, has given me some valuable insight into just how important career programs can be for the future of the Army and all those involved. I understand what you are about to undertake this week because it was approximately 12 years ago this month that I began an effort to completely re-engineer CP-12. I had to answer many of the tough questions that I know some of you have already been faced with as you began to consider how best to improve your career program. Questions like: Why do we need to change? Who do we include? What must we prepare for in the coming years? And, How best do we get it done and prepare our workforce?

I want to praise Bill Brown and the leadership of CP-18 for the improvements you are about to make in your career program this week. I believe your proposal of developing specific public works, environmental, and general professional tracks within the larger career program is a great idea. Let me just take a moment and talk about each of these.

Remember when I mentioned that we rely on the engineer to operate our cities? As we consider the Chief of Staff's vision for a new Army, it appears that civilians will likely be called upon to fill more and more Garrison Commander jobs. I see the DPW track as being one that will potentially help the Army develop the next generation civilian Garrison Commander as well as many other important sustaining base leaders.

The general track will be important in enhancing and further developing that science and engineering base for which the Army is famous. I remember back in the 1970s and 1980s when there was considerable professional and career emphasis on specialization. For example, if a biologist did not focus on the

mating rituals of the Great Plains Narrow-mouthed Toad then he or she may as well forget about finding their niche in the scientific world. Now I don't want to suggest that there is no need for experts in their field. Certainly there is always a need for specific expertise and specialists. However, with the down-sizing of the civilian workforce that we have seen over the years, the importance of having knowledge across a broad-based spectrum of disciplines has become even more important. In many ways, I believe we are beginning to see the pendulum on the debate between professional specialization and generalization begin to swing back toward individuals with a range of general skills.

As you might imagine, I have saved talking about the environmental track for last. In my job as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, I rely on the professionals in CP-18 everyday. I am particularly excited about the environmental track because

As you consider what needs to be done to develop the tracks and to further improve CP-18, I would like to leave you with a few lessons learned from when I was in the thick of re-engineer CP-12. First, involve as many people as possible. As I mentioned before, career programs mean different things to different people depending on where they are in their careers. Second, look to other programs for ideas. In this regard, I used two proven concepts known as SIS and SIW. SIS stands for “Steal Ideas Shamelessly”, and SIW stands for “Share Ideas Willingly”. Nobody in the Army has a strangle hold on good ideas all though from time -to-time I run into some who have a strangle hold on bad ideas. Look to other Army career programs and explore the wide variety of developmental programs that exist outside of the career programs in the Army and in the Department

of Defense. Consider what other Federal agencies do and have to offer, as well as what corporate America may be doing.

Finally, I would like to leave you with an important thought – If you want to move ahead in the Army, move in the same direction as the Army. The Army is undergoing a great transformation to prepare for the future. It is important that we remain in step so that we will always be there to support the soldier, and keep our Army the best in the world.

I wish you luck and great success over the next few days. This is your chance to make a lasting and important impact on the Army.

Thank you.